

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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FM USLO PEKING

TO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2089

S E C R E T PEKING 1184

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT CH

SUBJECT: SITUATION IN HANGCHOW

REF: A. HONG KONG 7694 B. PEKING 1133 C. PEKING A-30,
JULY 10, 1974

1. IN ADDITION TO COMPATIBILITIES CITED IN USLO PEKING'S
REPORT OF SITUATION IN HANGCHOW TO OTHER REPORTS CITED REFTEL A OF
FACTIONAL FIGHTING THERE, USLO REPORT ALSO CONTAINED CERTAIN
DISCREPANCIES WHICH CLEARLY DID NOT FIT THE OTHER REPORTS
AND WHICH COULD BE SIGNIFICANT IN JUDGING THE FEROCITY
AND THE TARGETS OF THE CURRENT CAMPAIGN. WHILE THERE
IS NO QUESTION THAT CHINA PRESENTLY HAS ITS SHARE OF STRIFE
AND BLOODSHED, WE BELIEVE THAT THESE PHENOMENA NEED TO BE
PLACED IN PERSPECTIVE AND THAT INTELLIGENCE REPORTS
REPORTING ARMED CLASHES SHOULD BE SCRUTINIZED WITH CARE.
ONE POSTER IN PEKING CLAIMING DEATHS IN A DISTANT PROVINCE
AND WRITTEN BY AN UNKNOWN CHINESE IS IN ITSELF INSUFFICIENT
EVIDENCE THAT ORDER IS BREAKING DOWN. SECOND HAND VERSIONS
OF CONDITIONS IN OTHER CHINESE CITIES, WE HAVE FOUND HERE,
CAN GET QUICKLY DISTORTED. WE ARE POINTING OUT APPARENT
DISCREPANCIES BECAUSE WE HOPE THEY WILL BE RESOLVED BY

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FUTURE REPORTING OR BY MORE DETAILED ANALYSIS.

A. VIOLENT FACTIONAL FIGHTING HAS BEEN REPORTED REPEATEDLY BY VARIOUS HONG KONG INTELLIGENCE SOURCES. WE HAVE NO REASON TO DOUBT REPORTS SUCH AS OIR 10246/74 AND LOOK FORWARD TO THE VIEWING THE FULL TEXT; HOWEVER, THERE IS SOME CONTRARY EVIDENCE WHICH ALTHOUGH LIMITED IN SCOPE AND DEPTH OF COVERAGE, NEVERTHELESS REPRESENTS FIRST HAND REPORTING BY EXPERIENCED CHINESE SPEAKING OBSERVERS. THREE USLO OFFICERS, THE CANADIAN MILATT AND THE ROMANIAN DCM AMONG OTHER VISITED HANGCHOW APRIL-JULY 1974 AND OBSERVED NO EVIDENCE OF THIS ALLEGED FIGHTING. TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS PLACED ON FOREIGNERS GOING TO HANGCHOW REPORTED BY HONG KONG HAVE NOT BEEN NOTED BY USLO WITH THE POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF HOROWITZ WHOSE PROPOSED TRAVEL THERE WAS TURNED DOWN IN LATE MARCH.

B. USLO OFFICER NOTED NUMEROUS FACTIONS NAMED IN SLOGANS IN HANGCHOW, BUT THE MOUNTAIN TOP AND MOUNTAIN BASE LEADING FACTIONS REPORTED BY HONG KONG SOURCES WERE NOT NOTED. THEY MAY BE COVERT FACTIONS KNOWN ONLY TO CHINESE, BUT AGAIN THERE IS A GNAWING INCONSISTENCY.

C. CHINESE SOURCES FROM HONG KONG REPORTING ON HANGCHOW IN JUNE DID NOT APPEAR TO NOTE THE PREVALENT ATTACKS ON MUNICIPAL AND PROVINCIAL LEADERS HSIA CHI, WANG TZU-TA AND SHEN TSE. THESE SLOGANS DOMINATED HANGCHOW AND REPRESENTED HARSH ATTACKS ON CURRENT LEADERSHIP. THIS COULD REPRESENT A DIMENSION OF THE STRUGGLE BEYOND A SIMPLE POWER CONFRONTATION BETWEEN RADICAL AND MODERATE FACTIONS LED BY CHANG YUNG-SHENG AND TAN CHI-LUNG. WE WOULD WELCOME HONG KONG COMMENTS.

2. WE HAVE ONE ADDITIONAL FRAGMENT ON THE 25 JUNE SLOGAN OF VICE CHAIRMAN WANG WHICH MAY HELP IN DECIPHERING ITS SIGNIFICANCE. A SUBSIDIARY AND MINOR SLOGAN CALLED FOR SUPPORTING VICE CHAIRMAN WANG'S COMMENTARY (PI SHIH) 2106 ON THE HSIAO YING HSIANG (1420/3602/1574). JAPANESE EMBOFF WHO ALSO SAW A SLOGAN SAYS HE BELIEVES THIS MAY RELATE TO A COMMENT BY WANG ON A LOCAL HANGCHOW PROPOSAL. THIS SOUNDS QUITE LIKELY TO US.

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